



SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – February 17, 2015

SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES 2014 OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Salem's Police Officer of the Year for 2014 is a veteran Animal Control Officer who has the proven ability to defuse threatening situations in any facet of police work.

"Chris is a veteran officer and his service to the city has been exemplary," says Tim Guthrie, Salem Police Chief. "I am so pleased that he has been selected by his peers to receive this award. It is truly an honor."

Back in February of 2014, Senior Officer Dillman was on his way to another call shortly after starting his regular shift when he heard radio traffic in reference to a possible incident of workplace domestic violence. A male suspect had made threats to his girlfriend and was thought to be headed to her place of employment. Dillman had a description of the suspect's car and information that the man was possibly armed when he began driving in that direction.

"He had made the claim that he was coming to the woman's office to kill her," he says.

Dillman quickly spotted the vehicle, but noticed that the person in the car didn't quite match the description of the would-be-suspect. Just as he was verifying the license plate number, the man stepped out of his car and headed toward the building.

"I immediately got out of my vehicle and ordered the suspect to get on the ground," he says. "We were able to detain and handcuff the suspect and take him into custody. Fortunately, he was unarmed and we haven't had any more problems."

Dillman is a 1986 Salem High School graduate, who joined the Salem P.D. as a dispatcher in October of that same year. In the fall of 1992, he became a sworn police officer in the Animal Control Unit, where he has served since that time.

“Over the course of his career, Chris had continued to grow personally and professionally,” says Mike Crawley, Salem Deputy Police Chief. “His leadership and unselfishness have made him a true asset to the police department and the Salem community.”

During his 28 year career with the Salem P.D., Dillman also worked for 15 years as a member of Salem’s Emergency Response Team (ERT) and he served on the department’s Color Guard for 20 years.

“What makes this job exciting is that I get to do the animal control side and the other police work that involves protecting and serving the public in all areas,” he says. “That’s why we take the oath we do, and respond to all of the calls in the city.”

Dillman is an avid outdoorsman who owns the hunting accessory company, Backwoods Drag. He and his wife of 27 years, Tonia, have three children and reside in the Glenvar area of Roanoke County.

“I was very humbled to simply be nominated, but to actually be selected by my peers is a big honor and something that is very special to me,” says Dillman.

Dillman will be formally recognized at the Salem-Roanoke County Chamber of Commerce’s annual dinner and gala on March 13 at the Hotel Roanoke.

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